/51 cont./

881 As soon as the menses appear, the head of the girl is closely shaved. She is placed naked but wrapped in a robe /manta/ in a supine position in a hammock which is slung up close to the ridgepole inside the house. Beneath the hammock a cloth is strung so that the girl cannot be seen from below.

In this position and as immobile as possible, she remains for five days (some say for only three), without eating and complying with a series of rules which later will have importance in her adult life. For this reason these rules must be observed by her to the letter, and she must be closely watched and counseled by a kinswoman, generally a maternal aunt, who does not leave her by day or night while she is suspended above, reminding her of what she should do and prohibiting her from doing what is tabooed so that she may not suffer the consequences in her future life.

[278 789] Before being placed in the hammock, the woman who is in charge of her gives her a herb drink to make her vomit a great deal, with the aim that the girl will hurl out, along with the food she took when she was not yet adult, all her infantile psychological characteristics, such as her mischievous and disobedient nature, her imagination, her way of thinking and believing, her /52/ irresponsibility, her incapacity for work, and, moreover, all those characteristic bodily mannerisms of a girl. Beyond this, the mother a kinswoman, or female friend [832] who may have a potent love charm considered of great effectiveness, places it on her neck or, if it is for external application, rubs it on the genital organs, on the breasts, and all over the body as prescribed, because at this particular time it is effective and especially because it is the propitious moment to acquire powers of attracting the opposite sex, qualities she will have to have in adult life to obtain the married happiness for which she is now being prepared.

If these two prescriptions are not complied with or are carried out faultily, the girl, changed into an adult, will be lacking in judgment and common sense in her actions, which

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881 While the girl is in the hammock, friends and relatives
292 keep arriving in large numbers, announced by the family, especially when welcoming well-to-do people, and then they start preparations for the feast: preparation of beverages and slaughtering of animals. All the consanguineous relatives contribute their share and foregather to join in what is called the chichamaya dance, during which are passed around large quantities of rum for the men, chicha for the women, and meat for all the participants. The guests turn up dressed in their best dress-up clothes: the men with their wide festival belts, their finest robes, their headbands (kiára) with the crest of feathers, or lacking such, hats adorned with feathers. The women /wear/ robes of brilliant colors, plenty of jewelry, very long shawls which hang down their backs nearly to the ground, sandals with large, brightly colored tassels, and, above all, facial painting, [302] preferably red, very carefully applied. On these occasions they dance through the night, the following morning, and the afternoon, and in this latter part of the day they may hold horse races on which large bets are wagered.

881 When the prescribed number of days are over, during
784 which the girl has not satisfied any of her body needs, not having taken any food during that time, according to what they say, her relatives unsling the hammock in the early hours of dawn and the girl descends, faint with hunger. The first food she receives is a drink of bija /achiote/ dissolved in water. Presently, little by little, they add to her diet thin corn mazamorra without milk or salt, and later a little milk and [262] meat. She must not, for example, eat any animal udder, because by doing so she would age prematurely and her face would be lined with wrinkles, deep and numerous, like that food.

881 The girl is bathed with four earthen jugs of water which
832 have been previously left exposed to the evening dew, as this gives it a special quality for whitening, which is important for the high appreciation both men and women have for a

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88| light-colored skin; For this reason, during the period of seclu-
832 sion the girl is bathed every morning with this water by the woman charged with looking after her. There was some talk of a second bathing at nightfall, but we could find no confirmation of this.

88| After being lowered, the girl is confined in a room separate from the house, the walls of which are sufficiently thick to prevent her being seen from outside, or, more generally, she is placed in a small room communicating with the house by a small opening so low and narrow that one can only enter it by crawling and which is closed off by a wooden door or a cloth to keep the adolescent from being seen. This room is built or improvised by the male relatives of the girl, who from this moment /54/ may not see her while the seclusion lasts. During all this period she is taken care of by one of her maternal kinswomen who is thoroughly acquainted with this rite of passage, who has the time to spare to devote to this service, who enjoys the full confidence of the family, and possesses all the ideal qualities of an adult woman, so that she may make of the novice someone similar to herself. It is also essential that she should know well the whole corpus of Guajiro culture so as to be able to instruct the initiate in it, especially the aspects relating to marriage and maternity. And, finally, she is required to be well practiced in domestic duties, especially in weaving. However, in these technical matters she may be replaced by, or receive help from, another close female relative in the training of the novice.

This woman bears the responsibility for the diet and medical care of the girl; she must herself prepare the prescribed
[514] foods and serve them to her, look after her hygiene, supplying her with a utensil to satisfy her body needs (a wooden box with a little sand), and require of her pupil that she keep her head
[831] covered with a kerchief, so that her growing hair may grow very black and shiny, which is of particular importance within their ideal of feminine beauty and also because this hair, as

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881 well as the whole organism of the future woman, must be com-
832 pletely renewed and different from what she had when she was
● a child and which she leaves behind on suffering the first menstruation, as well as each one of her childish psychic and physical habits.

881 One of the principal preoccupations of the person responsi-
278 ble for the care of the novice is her medication. This medical treatment includes especially the daily and repeated drinking of infusions or juices of certain herbs which are intended to assist her to reach perfection in all that is related to her future life. One of these medicines is the herb called hawapi, which is obtained from the herbsellers of the Sierra de Jarara and Sierra de Macuira, who grind it carefully into a paste which hardens with time. They daily scrape off a small portion of this, which is dissolved in water and given to the girl before her first meal, after the daily bath, at midday, and at sunset. The aim of this is to give the young woman a bodily aspect different from the childish one she had, as by its means she loses her drawn-out lines and her sex is defined by the development of her breasts, of her hips, and all of the adult female form, following the accepted canons of feminine physical beauty: a tall body with broad hips, breasts well developed, erect, solid, and having pronounced curves but firm of flesh. This herb, according to local belief, supplies fat to the essential parts of the body. /55/

Another of the medical attentions is directed to avoiding the return of menstruation during all the time the girl is secluded. If she is well cared for, says the Guajiro woman, it will not reappear; otherwise, however, it will. To obtain this result she has recourse to the empirical and traditional knowledge which she has of plants, and she gives her a series of juices or potions to avoid menstruation. The women say that these medicines influence their married life, as the woman who is well looked after during her seclusion will have easy deliveries, normal pregnancies, healthy children who will grow

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881 will soon be bought with heads of cattle. This signifies that her value will be high, such as corresponds to a woman of standing. She likewise takes great care that her hair does not fall into strange hands, as it is believed that it might be used 882 by some man who wants to do her harm by making with it a magic charm which would have the quality of causing her to fall in love with him; he on his part would scorn her and abuse her, as she would be left submissive to his will.

After the haircutting she is dressed in the traditional costume of an adult woman and is decked out with the customary jewelry and ornaments in accord with her family rank. She receives this jewelry from her mother, from her maternal aunts, and from her grandmother, and they are placed on her by the woman charged with caring for her or by a well-to-do kinswoman, so that they may never be lost. After this, they apply the facial painting, also for the first time, which, it being a feast day, should be made from red annatta /bija/. Then she makes her appearance at the feast, and she may dance and be courted. At this moment, crucial for her life, she must give signs of adult capabilities, showing evidence of the worth of the years of her novitiate, not only in the physical aspect of her fair skin and dark hair, in her mature figure, in her dress and ornaments, but also in the proper fulfillment of cultural patterns. The relatives carry on the feast as long as they can or think in keeping with their position. Afterward, the woman, ready now for marriage and motherhood, starts to comply with the patterns established in her culture for the adult woman.

881 Summarizing, we can say that the initiation of young women has the following characteristics: /58/

182 1. It has the significance of a new birth, preceded by a process of spiritual-physical transformation which converts the girl into an adult woman.

2. It is a system of preparation for adult social life, in the sense that /by its means/ are acquired knowledge of proper cultural patterns.

/61/

583 The married man is the head of a new cell, and this im-
985 plies family and social obligations. These he must face up to as a head of a family under peril of loss of prestige and lowering of position. With the coming of children his position becomes more and more extended, as his duties and rights are becoming joined and broadened, for to the obligations of a husband are added those of a father. And these are further complicated on contracting marriages with new women, as then he has reached, according to the Guajiro way of thinking, the maximum development of his male personality.

Valuation of virginity and of the woman. The value of
581 the Guajiro woman is fixed by the marriage payment, that is to
582 say, it is the economic assessment of her worth. The conditions of this valuation, traditional among the upper classes (as the lower classes have lost them through socio-economic conditions which even influence those of some standing), may be summarized thus:

581 The physical qualities which make a Guajiro woman
832 desirable are those that comply with the traditional aesthetic norm and are those that the woman after her seclusion (Cf. Initiation of Young Women) makes every endeavor to acquire at any cost: tall stature, balanced by well distributed flesh which gives her an appearance of robustness and full-bodiedness, so that when walking decked out in her ample clothes, she has an appearance both elegant and majestic; wide and robust hips (probably with an unconscious biological end in mind, or a sexual one, or a combination of both); small and upright breasts, as the opposite is considered almost repulsive; and, above all, firm flesh. This last is probably the most desired quality, as the man openly confesses that when his woman over the years loses it, he replaces her by another one who has it. The shape of the legs has no importance, probably because with the full, long dress they are out of sight. In the main, they are thin in relation to the body and frequently bowlegged /?cascorvas/.

/61 cont./

581 832 208 842 847

A woman tries to maintain these qualities as she well knows that they form the center of attraction to a man and that maternity steadily destroys them. This may be one of the reasons for the increasing use of birth control, for which they take herbs that do not allow them to conceive, abortives of all kinds, and they take advantage of their knowledge of their periods of sterility and avoid sexual intercourse at other than these periods.

Their facial features are of no great importance to them so long as they conform to the anthropological norms of the group. They prefer a face with large, dark eyes and beautiful, healthy teeth. Also, they are especially attracted by the whiteness of the skin as it indicates social standing because it is a sign that the woman is better able to look after herself by protecting herself from the sun of the region. During her /62/ seclusion the girl does not expose herself to the sunlight, and her greatest pride is that her skin has become whiter. Every morning she bathes with water left out previously in the evening dew, which besides having magic effects has the property of whitening the skin, and when she goes visiting she always covers her face with facial paints -- a customary practice required by etiquette, which also protects her from the sun's rays. During her seclusion the girl also complies with other beautifying and magic practices, such as denying herself certain meat like deer meat or animal udder, since this last, for example, will wrinkle her rapidly and she will lose some of her physical attractiveness.

A woman is well aware that her future married life will be affected in great measure by her preserving an agreeable appearance and that if the man does not feel satisfied she will be relegated to second place, and he will acquire another woman. For this reason she continually struggles to benefit by all known means to recapture her husband and retain him and avoid his acquiring other women. This is the reason that the mother, when her daughter is in the hammock ready to be hoisted up during her initiation, places on her a love charm which has the property of attracting men and of which we spoke in a previous chapter.

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581 The Guajiro woman also knows that men admire dress and so endeavors to adapt hers to their taste: robes of light, attractive colors, amply cut, considerably ornamented (acculturation), and for feast days or visiting all the collection of jewelry: bracelets, anklets, necklaces of several strings or thick chains with a pendant, numerous rings with big stones, especially tumas, jewelry she was given on finishing her seclusion by her maternal relative of the most distinction and prestige. From then onward she begins to wear them, in smaller quantities when she is at home, but the whole set when attending a feast or visiting. In Jarara a distinctive mark of high social standing is the use of earrings /orejeras may mean earplugs. -- Translator/, because in this region the women, who are not very careful in their dress, use this ornament which is an indication of their social and economic position.

581 The combination, then, of dress and physical appearance are two essential conditions of the attractiveness of the Guajiro woman, which determine her success in order to be bought at a good price or that her husband may not lose interest because of other marriages. The preservation of her physical attractions is a struggle which she maintains for these two reasons; also, dressing well, apart from making her attractive, is a sign of the class to which she belongs and which she must preserve at any sacrifice, as therein lies the prestige of her kin and the maintenance of their status. /63/

In addition to the sexual incentive expressed in previous paragraphs, the Guajiro seeks in his marriage an economic value, that is to say, a woman who possesses certain qualifications that will assure him a certain latitude. The payment he makes for a wife permits him to demand of her his keep and that of his children, for which reason he seeks one capable of complying with this custom by her own efforts.

The work that the woman can carry out to fulfill this economic responsibility is of a domestic nature: the making of hammocks /chinchorros and hamacas/, bags, belts, pottery,

[93 cont.]
438 in charms, which usually have no magic value and are a com-
789 plete fraud. These women are accustomed to putting in a small
673 wool bag something that has the appearance of a charm and selling it as the legitimate article.

632 5. A love charm is worth about 300 Colombian pesos, and
435 just the loan of it for a few days to a friend for him to get the
426 desired results is paid for. Such a temporary loan is worth 100 Colombian pesos.

632 6. Besides the love charms which are strictly Guajiro,
[791] there are others that the so-called "Gocha" women sell. There are many of these women in Maracaibo and Zulia. Unfortunately, we could not obtain any special data about these makers of magic charms, of whom there are many on the eastern borders of La Guajira.

7. The charms serve equally for either sex; what varies is in general terms the effects of the charm.

8. Some personal objects, such as hair, sandals, etc., may form the basis of a love charm of great magic potential. This potential is above all due to the possession of a part of the personality of the person whom one wishes to harm.

9. Different love charms can be mixed together.

10. Charms may be acquired among civilizados. This kind of magic material is carefully kept in glass containers made especially for this purpose. [94]

Love charms. The Guajiro Indian, man or woman, knows and uses different charms to attract or repel love. They have them of different classes as regards form, preparation, and raw material. Some of them are the following:

a) One has the shape and general appearance of the excrement of the machorro, (a species of lizard). It has been stated that one of the magic objects used by the shaman is a small wool bag containing a paste prepared by a herbalist that is in the shape of goat excrement and is used to attract the spirits.

b) Another, which is kept inside a small glass receptacle, looks like a stone and is accompanied by some small pieces of coral.

c) Another is made in the following way: The root of a herb, very abundant on Itojoro Hill, is ground and [the paste]

[94 cont.]

832 made into a ball. This paste is dissolved in the water that the person wishing to profit by its powers uses in his bath, or some other way which we shall see later.

d) Also considered a love charm is the string of necklaces made of small pieces of coconut shell and worn as ornaments by the Indian girls.

[826] e) A thing that is very commonly used as a love charm, especially by girls, is their own hair.

f) With the hair which has been taken from a girl when her first menstrual period occurs and mixed with hummingbird's blood, dog's tail, and achiote [bija], they make a love charm which has a most powerful effect on the girl to whom the hair belongs. The man who acquires it can consider himself virtually her owner.

g) Lastly, an element that enters decisively in the effective value of love charms is achiote powder, which should be rubbed on certain parts of the body of the owner of the charm when he or she wishes to attain a certain end.

Application and effects. When a woman makes use of a love [262] charm which will give her the power always to be attractive to her husband and to regain his lost love or to win it, she should not eat any roasted food while she is trying to apply the qualities of her charm. She must also take the charm and rub it all over her body when she has recently given birth to a child or during her menstrual period. It is then that she should deny herself all [262] roasted food (meat, roasted corn, etc.) on which there has been direct action from fire. She should also abstain from all [95] kinds of milk, should not go out in the sun, and should not let her face be seen by another woman. This last point is very important as if this should happen the effects she seeks will be obtained not by the person following the indicated regimen but will [834] automatically be transferred to the woman who has seen her face. The woman who is owner of the charm must also abstain from cohabiting with her husband. When she bathes, she must do so not in the brook but inside her own home. The bathing must be done by another woman, starting at the crown of her head, then her shoulders, then her breast, and thus on to the whole body.

[95 cont.]

832 Once she has finished her bath, she must hang up her dress over her hammock to dry, also inside the house. It is also necessary for her to apply achiote powder to certain parts of her body, such as under her arms, on her breasts, on her genital organs, etc., with the object of aiding the magic action of the charm on those parts, and avoiding the loss or lessening of the magic power. This special regimen must be carried through for four consecutive days, at the end of which the effect has already been obtained — or at least there is no longer the fear that it may pass to some other person.

In general, every man or woman who possesses a charm keeps his body (armpits, breasts, genital organs, etc.) permanently dusted with achiote powder.

The men also make use of the same charms as the women. The magic power of these charms enables them to obtain the wholehearted love of women without their own affections becoming involved.

881 832 When a young woman reaches the age of puberty, and her first menstrual period arrives, a love charm is hung about her neck during all the time that she is kept indoors and hanging up in her hammock (ritual of initiation of young girls). This charm will give her the quality of being admired and loved by men. The plan in wearing this token is that when she leaves her seclusion she will find the man who will buy her for a wife at a good price. The charm is hung about the adolescent girl's neck by her mother or by a maternal aunt.

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832 When a girl's mother or aunt finds out that she has not been happy in her love life, they obtain charms which will make her more lovable and desirable.

[826] 832 673 Women should be very careful of their hair when it has been cut after the appearance of their first menstruation because if a man gets hold of it he practically becomes the owner of the woman, for by mixing it with hummingbird blood, dog's tail, and achiote he can make a charm which will act directly against the owner of the hair. The man, with the firm intention of causing her harm, may show her the charm or better still may produce it when she has her back to him. [96] The woman because of this simple charm becomes madly enamored with the man

[96 cont.]
832 673 and is made foolish and boastful of the difficult position she is placed in.

This charm, capable of such mischief according to the belief of the natives, is used especially when a man wishes to cause some woman harm or to mock either her or her relatives.

754 832 578 Fortunately for women in general they have a way to scoff at, or revenge themselves on, the men who have been false and whose love they no longer want – only revenge. For such cases they buy a charm from the old Indian women who know of these things, a charm which they place among the clothing of the man on whom they wish to effect a malevolent action. Then they obtain an old sandal belonging to their victim and burn it. It is most important that the sandal should be old so [826 828] that the sweat of the man in question, as part of his personality, should have soaked into it.

With these two simple things, the Indian women affirm, the man loses his senses, he goes about as if stupefied, neglects his person, is a failure and a brutish person thereafter. So sure are they of this that they say that a mad Indian living in Nazaret is in that condition because of a charm like that we have just described after he had been one of the most elegant and well dressed of Indians.

832 Another love charm is used not to regain a man's love that has been lost but to retain affection that is desired; and as it is the woman's property – for evil against the man – this aims at making the man unable to take another woman. This charm, like others, is obtained from the old Indian women of the Sierra de Jarara, and it is made of carefully ground herbs to which they add achiote, an excellent substance for charms. The mixture is wrapped in a rag, or it is kept in a little wool bag.

The effect of love charms can be diverted to other purposes. For example, when a woman wants her husband to make her a special present she goes to her charm, picks it up, shakes it well, and looks firmly at it, at the same time asking for the desired object. The charm works, and the woman obtains what she wished for.

Necklaces of small perforated discs of coconut shell are transformed into love charms when the women experts in this

[96 cont.]
832 witchcraft have "whispered" over them, that is, when they repeat over them a series of magic incantations which have the object of giving them the power to make a man, or men, love the owner [97] as she may desire, and especially her husband when it is the case of a married woman.

We have seen in previous paragraphs how the hair of a pubescent girl serves as a base for men to make magic charms which can be used against the girl. But the hair of such girls in different circumstances serves to attract men in general and causes a woman to be looked on with such deference by a man that he buys her to take as a wife at a good price. For this 826 302 reason the young Guajiro woman, especially those of the Sierra de Jarara, keep their hair when it is cut. At times to make the action more effective and to obtain better and quicker results, 237 they place it under a patch of cow dung. The association of their hair with cow dung is founded on a socio-economic phenomenon which we might briefly clarify.

556 583 832 We have seen repeatedly that wealth in La Guajira is calculated by the number of heads of livestock that an individual owns; and it can be observed how a wife in their social organization is obtained by purchase. When the buyer is a rich man he pays in heads of cattle or horses; when poor, in goats and sheep. Hence it is clear every woman aspires to be paid for in cows and in a greater number than those paid for other women, as this establishes an advance in her social status. This is the reason why she buries her hair under cow dung and not that of any other animal. She has made a very primitive association but 231 one that speaks for itself. It would appear that the magic attraction is brought about by the dung, and the results desired are increased if this is from the cow, the animal of most value in La Guajira.

826 In any case, young women are most careful about leaving their cut hair about where it could be picked up by another person, and for this reason they guard it all their lives, giving it in this way a sacred quality. This characteristic which we have called sacred stems from the magic connection established by the primitive between a person and the different parts of his body, to

[157 cont.]

181 mental outlook it originates — imbued, as we have affirmed, 771 with an animistic determinism — and the beliefs it implies in 789 the different angles of Guajiro human activity, as it will have been possible to observe throughout the length of the work we are presenting. So much is this so that the very basic impulses of the individual are seen in many circumstances to be influenced by magic.

834 a) To prove this in the sexual aspect it suffices for us to cite again some facts already described and explained in previous chapters, such as the taboos imposed on the shamans, especially when they are women and according to which they should cohabit exclusively with their husbands, avoid caresses, motions, prolonged coitus, and pregnancy, and never exercise their functions during their menstrual periods. Besides this, it can be seen in the lifting of sexual taboos, or better said, the permitted violation of the norms which rule the community in this respect during the celebration of the Fiesta of the Kid, which reaches the point of allowing the consummation of the carnal act among the unmarried, an act absolutely prohibited in their society in normal times and which would provoke — as fully explained in the corresponding section — compensation payment and even interclan war with its tremendous consequences of persecution, annihilation, and slavery. It can also be observed in what we called the "proof of virginity," which permits a male to caress the bodies of young women who take part in the fiesta, an action prohibited, as in the previous case, in normal times.

● [832] Among the charms we also found some that act in this way, and also significant is the act of rubbing bixa ointment on the genital organs and breasts to make them more effective in love-making.

262 b) In the matter of food we saw proofs of the influence of magic, especially related to the life of the shaman, particularly when he is in one of his "illumination" trances or in a curing ceremony. This influence also shows itself in the shaman's initiation, in the initiation of [158] young women, in the magic contamination of food by some animals which can cause sickness in newborn children, and in the prohibition against eating the flesh of the hawk which produces sterility in young and old of both sexes. Also, it is found in relatives being forbidden to eat the

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

88| Francisco whispered to me that there was a girl in there. She had been shut up ever since the first signs of womanhood had appeared and would stay there a long time, emerging in due course pale and beautiful. While shut up she was called *majayura*.

The girl was not supposed to show herself to outsiders, but we dangled knives and glass beads and she was allowed out to be photographed. As long as a girl is confined, her family may not see her. She is guarded by an old woman, a near relative, and it was she we bribed—to let us take the picture.

When a girl first menstruates, she at once tells her mother or other close female relative. She is then given an emetic so that she rids herself of any food she ate before she became a woman. The implication being, one imagines, that she also rids herself of all childish ideas, vomiting them up. Then her hair is cut off, and she is rolled naked in a tunic and laid in a hammock that is hoisted up to the roof at the back of the hut. There she must lie, fasting, for three or four days, while an elderly woman relative keeps watch over her.

●[832] Often an amulet that will make men like her is placed beside her in the hammock. She has to lie motionless and neither scratch nor spit; these could have a deleterious effect.

News of the event has now gone out to relations and others, and everyone turns up wearing their finery, painted and ornamented. Cattle are butchered and they dance the so-called *chichamaya*. Sometimes there are horse-races as well. After some days the girl is allowed to leave her ham-

[297] mock and is washed with water that has been put out in the dew, which is considered to give a light complexion. She may now begin eating small quantities of maize gruel and other prescribed foods. Then she is shut up in the little hut or in a separate part of the larger dwelling-house, but at all events hidden from the world. Not infrequently the little hut is built as part of the greater.

[832] The girl's guardian sees that she drinks certain decoctions of herbs intended to develop her physically, so that she is to the taste of Guajiro men.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

How must a girl look to find favour with them? She must be tall, broad-hipped and have firm prominent breasts and well-rounded curves. Flabbiness the men do not like, but they do not seem to worry about the shape of their women's legs. These, of course, are hidden beneath the wide tunic, but the wind sweeps this against them, outlining them. It is fortunate for the Guajiro women that their men do not attach importance to the shape of their legs, for they are seldom lovely. To our eyes they seem too short and badly shaped. The men attach much importance to gentle, dignified behaviour. The Guajiro girl should have large eyes and good teeth, but the most important thing of all is that she should be light-skinned; that is the hall-mark of gentility. No girl ever neglects her beauty decoctions, not even when she is in the charge of the nuns at the mission station and thus not isolated as the rule is at home. The rules she has to observe and the medicines she must take are of importance not only for her appearance, but also for her physique. If she follows her instructions, she will give birth without difficulty and there will be no risk of the baby being still-born. Her mother and her family are held to be partially responsible if the first-born dies in or after birth, for that means that on some point the complicated rules governing the girl's period of incarceration have been neglected.

A girl is by no means idle while she is shut up; quite the contrary. She spins and weaves industriously, under supervision of the old woman, and learns the details of housekeeping and how to prepare different foods. Actually she will know most of this already, having taken a more or less active part in the work of the household ever since she was able to walk. She also receives instruction in how to behave, is initiated into the duties incumbent upon a housewife, what she must do as spouse and mother, in the various aspects of married life and in the mysteries of sex.

No man is allowed to enter the girl's little hut, and she is not allowed to meet men, receive visitors or be with her family, if visitors come. When the guardian considers that the girl can be let out, usually after a year or two—the news spreads quickly and guests start to come with or without

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

later, for he has been brought up always to try and make things right.

During her period of isolation a girl also learns how to satisfy her husband erotically and always to be ready, when he is excited. To retain his love she may employ magic as well as her own natural powers of attraction. Knowing that a woman loses some of her looks and attraction during pregnancy, wives often try, after having had several children, to hinder fertilization by taking certain herbal drugs and by magical means.

'Polygamy is permitted, is it not, Mauana?'

'Yes, a man can take several wives. As long as he pays the bride-price, no one can say anything, but her family would never allow a better-class girl to become the second wife of anyone. And you see, custom decrees that a Guajiro wife, whether the first or a concubine, must acquiesce if the husband takes a new wife. Similarly, it is considered that wives ought to live in peace and friendship. They must receive a new concubine cordially and all show their best side to the husband. They must help each other to watch the children and not display jealousy if the husband prefers one to the others.

'That is how it should be, but the reality is quite different. Very often the wives live in the same house, which naturally leads to conflict more easily than when each has her own hut. Jealousy or envy are common in these harems. Enmity and quarrelling are not infrequent, nor is actual fighting. The wives spy upon each other, destroy each other's things and make all sorts of scenes. One or other perhaps comes to hate the husband. It is said that a certain man, who shall be nameless, had noticed something of the sort and did not dare to be at home while a family feud lasted. An enemy could have bribed one of his wives to put poison in his maize beer.'

'That does not sound pleasant!'

'No, polygamy undoubtedly has its drawbacks!' Mauana agreed. 'I myself have only one wife, but several bed slaves,' he added with an artful look in his eye.

Even though all a man's marriages are considered legal,

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

quarrelsome, the parting drink of spirits having had its effect. One old man after much swaying in the saddle was finally thrown off by his jibbing mule. He landed in a prickly bush and became frantic. He wanted to see blood. Luckily his weapons were on his saddle, but he managed to remove one of his spurs and began stabbing with it at those who were trying to help him up. Francisco received a jab, but he and a couple of others managed to overpower the old ruffian, whom they bound and tied to his saddle. Then his wife led him and his mount away.

One by one the groups went off in their various directions. We came to the rancho of the young Indian, our new friend. He had several big huts, built on the sand, where there was no greenery or shade. He explained that when the rains came, it did not become swampy there, as in most other places, but the water ran through the sand and you could walk dry-shod. There were looms in several of the open huts. At one sat our host's young, light-complexioned wife, who undoubtedly was a great beauty by Guajiro standards, and in another his aged mother with a wrinkled clever face.

We were offered goat's milk as a refreshment. I was always amazed at the care with which these Indians collected the small quantities of milk the goats yielded, for each gave a mere squirt. We took a gulp of goat's milk in order to avoid having to drink spirits.

The women were in a great bustle, evidently getting a spread ready. The Guajiro are hospitable, and when strangers or friends come they must have the best the house can provide. If need be, the host gives up his own hammock and lies on the ground.

Our host had plenty of hammocks. After resting a while, my wife went inside to look at the weaving, while I produced one of the pistols I had bought at an auction and demonstrated it, shooting a couple of shots, the noise and smoke of which appeared highly satisfactory to our host. Hastily he drew me aside and whispered that he had something that ought to interest me. He had *anu* and was willing to part with this precious, sought-after article in exchange for my noisy pistol. After all I had a companion without a

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

wife and he perhaps could do with it. I knew what unu was, but had never expected to be offered a secret magical object by an Indian who scarcely knew me.

Unu was one of the many *cóntra* or instruments of magic used by the Indians either to protect or help the possessor. Unu stimulated love. The Guajiro have not only their old Indian magic, but some of Spanish-Moorish and African negro origin. Where these cóntra are concerned, it would be most interesting, though difficult, to find out which were of red, black or white origin. They differ in character, but one and all can be lent or hired to a person of the same sex and can be used by that person with as much effect as when used by the owner himself.

A unu love magic was most difficult and expensive to acquire. The equivalent of £30 or £40 was the current price, while the owner will normally charge £10 or £15 if he hires it out. A cóntra must not be shown to any unauthorized person, as its power may then transfer itself to the person who happens to see it.

Love talismans were of different kinds. That considered to be of the best quality was a tiny pouch containing small pieces of what looked like the droppings of some sort of lizard. The magic stuffs of Guajira often imitate the excrement of various animals. Others consist of little stones in a glass bottle, or a decoction of herbs, which the person on whom the magic is to be worked has to take or wash in. One powerful and unfailing love specific is the hair clippings of the confined majayura girl, mixed with the blood of humming birds and other ingredients, but that can only be used on the girl in question. With her, however, it cannot fail.

The love magic the young Indian now said he would give me was one of those little pouches, thus very precious. He was willing to let it go because he liked my pistol so much. He had no further need of a love specific now that he had got himself a beautiful wife with its help—and, he might have added, thanks to a good supply of cattle. And if he ever wanted another cóntra, well, he knew where to get one. But he would not get any more wives. He was a

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

778 Christian now and intended to have done with such things,
832 and the Father had said that it was better to turn to a saint.
● And, of course, I was asked to say nothing about the transaction—that was always done in such cases.

I, of course, was keen to do business.

[784] 'But remember now not to eat roast meat or maize, nothing that has been in direct contact with fire. Otherwise you may fare badly.'

One has to observe certain rules of diet and behaviour when using a cóntra, but not so long as it lies idle.

The little pouch with the love specific thus passed into my possession, and I gave it our photographer to keep in the pocket of his camera case, as I had done with other small objects.

After we returned to the mission I told Francisco of my acquisition. He did not seem at all surprised, so evidently he and the young Indian had been in touch before the offer was made. I also told Francisco that Gladtvet was looking after the talisman, and he nodded understandingly. Gladtvet had no wife with him and no doubt would like to captivate a nice young girl, if one came his way.

574 Our host, whom Francisco told me would one day be a
778 chief, asked us to stay the night. He was of course prepared
832 to place a slave at the disposal of the solitary white man as hospitality required, but, he added, the prettiest girl in the
[567] house was a debtor-slave, whom he could not order, so the white man would have to charm her, if he wished to have her. It would be a good opportunity to try the talisman I had just acquired. Francisco said afterwards that it would not have been a reliable test of the talisman's efficacy, since undoubtedly the girl would have been very easily conquered by a large silver coin. Altogether, he considered, it would have been more practical for me to have bought a slave for Gladtvet than that expensive love charm, since, as he pointed out, slaves were cheap now, at the height of the dry season, owing to the shortage of food.

It was no use trying to explain to Francisco that this magic talisman, like all the other things I had bought from the Indians, was to go into a museum. He would merely

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

have got the impression that I intended to keep it in a safe place in order to exploit it commercially, that is to say, hire it out to applicants. He could never have understood what a museum was.

We declined our host's invitation as politely as we could. Gladtvet's interest in his female slaves—who now had their faces painted black into the bargain—was very lukewarm.

We were served a dish of goat's meat, from a goat that our friend had been given at the funeral. Unfortunately it was old and tough, and my wife had to leave almost her entire helping. That was not regarded impolite in Guajira. On the contrary our hostess looked delighted and hastily removing it and herself to a very short distance, set about engulfing it. One might have thought that she did not get enough to eat, but no Guajiro wife was underfed in a well-to-do household. Often they had more food than they wanted. Why, then, did she not leave the helping for her slaves? Because she wanted what had been left by the lightest-complexioned woman she had ever seen, since one can become fairer oneself by eating what such a being has touched. For that reason, my wife, as a gesture of politeness, often left some of her food when we ate in Indian houses, to the delight of the women of the household. What I left would have been of use only to the medicine man, and that because I was a learned man.

On our return to the mission, the monks gave us a large piece of beef, which we grilled.

'Ay, ay,' said Francisco after the feast, 'the photographer señor should not have eaten grilled meat. I forgot his cóntra.'

'His cóntra?'

'Yes, he has the cóntra now. He ought to have eaten something else. What will happen now?'

The next day Gladtvet had a pain in his stomach and Francisco became frightened. Francisco had been brought up at the mission and considered himself a good Catholic, but that did not prevent him believing in magic. However, our medicine chest relieved Gladtvet's pains more easily than Francisco expected.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

778 Francisco and I had several talks about the love cóntra.
832 He pointed out that it was important for the man or woman wishing to use such a talisman to powder certain parts of his or her body with red schiste powder. He gave me detailed instructions which I wrote down, as Francisco thought, in order to instruct Gladtvet, so that he should be ready, if he discovered a suitable object.

The women have love charms as well as the men. With a really effective one a woman can make sure of her husband's love for ever, or win back the love she has lost. When she intends to use such means, she must keep indoors and diet
784 for four days and nights, not expose herself to the sun nor see another woman's face, and she must avoid all milk and anything roasted. She must bath indoors and powder herself. There is a talisman which the wise women of the Jarará Hills manufacture, a stuff of herbs wrapped in a piece of cloth, which prevents a husband from taking another woman.

778 Sometimes a woman will make a man fall in love with her
832 as an act of revenge. To do this she must get hold of one of
784 his old sandals or something he has worn. This she burns and resultant cóntra is introduced into the man's clothes or belongings. This often ends in the man becoming mad. A man can also avenge himself by making a girl fall in love with him, if he can manage to get some of her hair clippings. For that reason women hide these most carefully all their lives.

778 An Indian, when greatly attracted by a girl, will often
832 make the greatest sacrifices and undergo all sorts of difficulties to get her. Having succeeded, he will often go off quite soon with his herds to some other part of the peninsula. After that he is not heard of again, and his wife is left to support herself as best she can. That shows that she had attracted him by means of a cóntra which had been very effective, but that she had then been incautious enough to let it go from her, or it may have lost its power.

There are cóntras for other things than love, e.g., for luck in hunting and in war, to acquire wealth and reputation and to protect oneself against certain spirts or dangers.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

the men were already quite drunk. Everyone was chattering, laughing and enjoying themselves. It was more like a fair than a funeral. The sun was in the zenith and there was no shade anywhere. Most of the men had removed their cloaks, only putting them on to go to the bier and lament; but the women kept their tunics on; there were no half-naked women to be seen there. Some of them had tunics of light bought material, and when the wind pressed the cloth against their bodies their forms stood out like reliefs and their skins shone through the thin material. Many of the men devoured them with their eyes, but the women's interest seemed riveted to the steaming boiled meat.

We met a thin and obviously poor Indian who expressed satisfaction at the number of funerals that had lately taken place. He had been attending them uninterruptedly for almost a month, had had meat every day and was beginning to put on weight. Yet he was not high in the social scale. Each person was entertained in accordance with his social rank.

There was not much sleep that night. Lamentation continued beside the bier all night, while sounds of singing, shouts and squabbling came from the Indian camp. We had been told that it would be a day or two before the dead man was buried. That is not done until all the cattle allotted for the funeral have been slaughtered. A number of beasts had been set aside to provide the meat the guests took away with them, and others were being saved for the subsequent funeral. We knew that in two years' time the dead man's bones would be dug up and another feast held.

In that climate a body should not remain above ground even two days, and yet the funerals of the rich lasted much longer. Thus they swathe the bodies of the rich in as many pieces of cloth as possible and in several cow-hides in an attempt to keep the stench from being too offensive. There was a lot of talk about the funeral of a rich chief, José Dolores, that had taken place some years before. How many cattle were slaughtered on that occasion is not known for certain—the monks said about three thousand—but it is known that the feast lasted two and a half months. The body